

Federal Communications Commission

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clear from the request itself, the Commission shall seek additional clarification before assigning the request to a specific category.

(5) The term *educational institution* refers to a preschool, a public or private elementary or secondary school, an institution or graduate higher education, an institution of professional education and an institution of vocational education, which operates a program or programs of scholarly research.

(6) The term *non-commercial scientific institution* refers to an institution that is not operated on a commercial basis as that term is referenced in paragraph (a)(4) of this section, and which is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry.

(7) The term *representative of the news media* refers to any person actively gathering news for an entity that is organized and operated to publish or broadcast news to the public. The term *news* means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. Examples of news media entities include television or radio stations broadcasting to the public at large, and publishers of periodicals (but only in those instances where they can qualify as disseminators of "news") who make their products available for purchase or subscription by the general public. These examples are not intended to be all inclusive. Moreover, as traditional methods of news delivery evolve (e.g., electronic dissemination of newspapers through telecommunications services), such alternative media would be included in this category. In the case of "freelance" journalists, they may be regarded as working for a news organization if they can demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication through that organization, even though not actually employed by it.

[53 FR 39093, Oct. 5, 1988]

§0.467 Search and review fees.

(a)(1) Subject to the provisions of this section, an hourly fee shall be charged for recovery of the full, allowable direct costs of searching for and reviewing records requested under §0.460(e) or §0.461, unless such fees are

precluded or waived pursuant to §0.470. The fee is based on the grade level of the employee(s) who conduct(s) the search or review, as specified in the following schedule:

Grade	Hourly fee
GS-1	\$13.43
GS-2	14.62
GS-3	16.48
GS-4	18.49
GS-5	20.69
GS-6	23.06
GS-7	25.63
GS-8	28.38
GS-9	31.36
GS-10	34.52
GS-11	37.93
GS-12	45.47
GS-13	54.06
GS-14	63.89
GS-15	75.14

NOTE: These fees will be modified periodically to correspond with modifications in the rate of pay approved by Congress.

(2) The fees in paragraph (a)(1) of this section were computed at Step 5 of each grade level based on the General Schedule effective January 2008 and include 20 percent for personnel benefits.

(b) Search fees may be assessed for time spent searching, even if the Commission fails to locate the records or if the records are determined to be exempt from disclosure.

(c) The Commission shall charge only for the initial review, i.e., the review undertaken initially when the Commission analyzes the applicability of a specific exemption to a particular record. The Commission shall not charge for review at the appeal level of an exemption already applied. However, records or portions of records withheld in full under an exemption that is subsequently determined not to apply may be reviewed again to determine the applicability of other exemptions not previously considered. The costs of such a subsequent review, under these circumstances, are properly assessable.

(d) The fee charged will not exceed an amount based on the time typically required to locate records of the kind requested.

(e) If the Commission estimates that search charges are likely to exceed \$25 or the amount which the requester indicated he/she is prepared to pay, then it shall notify the requester of the estimated amount of fees. Such a notice

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shall offer the requester the opportunity to confer with Commission personnel with the object of revising or clarifying the request.

(f) When the search has been completed, the custodian of the records will give notice of the charges incurred to the person who made the request.

(g) The fee shall be paid to the Financial Management Division, Office of Managing Director, or as otherwise directed by the Commission.

(h) Records shall be inspected within 7 days after notice is given that they have been located and are available for inspection. After that period, they will be returned to storage, and additional charges may be imposed for again producing them.

(Secs. 4, 303, 307, 48 Stat., as amended, 1066, 1082, 1083; 47 U.S.C. 154, 303, 397; 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 7316, Feb. 19, 1975, as amended at 45 FR 85028, Dec. 24, 1980; 49 FR 13368, Apr. 4, 1984. Redesignated and amended at 53 FR 39093, Oct. 5, 1988; 59 FR 21946, Apr. 27, 1994; 64 FR 31139, June 10, 1999; 65 FR 51234, Aug. 23, 2000; 66 FR 42453, Aug. 13, 2001; 67 FR 58543, Sept. 17, 2002; 68 FR 4105, Jan. 28, 2003; 69 FR 13746, Mar. 24, 2004; 70 FR 6593, Feb. 8, 2005; 71 FR 9266, Feb. 23, 2006; 72 FR 5632, Feb. 7, 2007; 73 FR 11562, Mar. 4, 2008]

§0.468 Interest.

Interest shall be charged those requesters who fail to pay the fees charged. The agency will begin assessing interest charges on the amount billed starting on the 31st day following the day on which the billing was sent. The date on which the payment is received by the agency will determine whether and how much interest is due. The interest shall be set at the rate prescribed in 31 U.S.C. 3717.

[53 FR 39094, Oct. 5, 1988]

§0.469 Advance payments.

(a)(1) The Commission may not require advance payment of estimated FOIA fees except as provided in subsection (a)(2) or where the Commission estimates or determines that allowable charges that a requester may be required to pay are likely to exceed \$250.00 and the requester has no history of payment. Where allowable charges are likely to exceed \$250.00 and the requester has a history of prompt pay-

ment of FOIA fees the Commission may notify the requester of the estimated cost and obtain satisfactory assurance of full payment.

(2) Where a requester has previously failed to pay a fee charged in a timely fashion (i.e., within 30 days of the date of the billing), the Commission may require the requester to pay the full amount owed plus any applicable interest as provided in §0.468, and to make an advance payment of the full amount of the estimated fee before the Commission begins to process a new request or a pending request from that requester.

(3) When the Commission acts under paragraph (a) (1) or (2) of this section, the administrative time limits prescribed in subsection (a)(6) of the FOIA (i.e., 10 working days from receipt of initial requests and 20 working days from receipt of appeals from initial denials, plus permissible extensions of these time limits) will begin only after the agency has received the fee payments described above.

(b) [Reserved]

[53 FR 39094, Oct. 5, 1988]

§0.470 Assessment of fees.

(a)(1) Commercial use requesters. When the Commission receives a request for documents for commercial use, it will assess charges that recover the full direct cost of searching for, reviewing and duplicating the records sought pursuant to §§0.466 and 0.467, above.

(2) Educational and non-commercial scientific institution requesters and requesters who are representatives of the news media. The Commission shall provide documents to requesters in these categories for the cost of reproduction only, pursuant to §0.465 above, excluding reproduction charges for the first 100 pages, provided however, that requesters who are representatives of the news media shall be entitled to a reduced assessment of charges only when the request is for the purpose of disseminating information.

(3) All other requesters. The Commission shall charge requesters who do not fit into any of the categories above fees which cover the full, reasonable direct cost of searching for and reproducing